Staple Bend Tunnel

State/Province: Pennsylvania  County: CAMBRIA
City/Town: NE of Johnstown
Street:
Associated Waterway: Little Conemaugh River

UTM Coordinates: 17,682120.4469620

History & Use in Service; Use Since Abandonment:
"Next to the Conemaugh Viaduct, the tunnel at the Staple Bend of the Conemaugh, 4 miles east of Johnstown, attracted great attention. It was the first railroad tunnel built in America, and stands (1897) alone amidst the grandeur of the mountains as a silent witness of the deeds performed by the Commonwealth in its efforts to annihilate distance. It is 901 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 19 feet high within the arch. Its cost was $37,498.84½ cents.

Tunnel was first proposed as part of the route in S.H. Long and Major John Wilson's 1830 report to cut a mile from the route which otherwise would be required by the bend of the River.

Description (Visible Remains at the site):
16-foot bore through solid rock, facings of cut stone at its ends, and most of its 901-foot length naturally arched. Like the Little Conemaugh Viaduct (4 miles east and completed in the same year), it challenged the admiration of the public 'for boldness of design and strength and beauty of execution' (Hubertis Cummings, Historic PA leaflet #19)

History & Use in Service; Use Since Abandonment:

Present Property Owners:

Location of Deed Description:

Bibliography (Published, unpublished mss, maps, photographs):

Agencies, Individuals Interested in Preservation/Restoration:

National Register/CHNR, Other Recognition:

Investigation made by:
Address: (P.H. STOTT 6/xii/75)

A sketch map or illustration of the site should be included on the reverse.